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ABSTRACT

The Asia-Pacific Regional Consultation on Adult Education was held for the following purposes: review progress and trends in adult education policies and programs since 1995; identify issues, problems, and constraints facing adult and nonformal education; and identify emerging priorities and future trends for effective promotion of adult and nonformal education in the Asia-Pacific Region. The consultation featured a video presentation, panel presentations, sharing of country experiences, and roundtable discussions of the following topics: adult education as a tool for poverty alleviation and improvement of quality of life; adult education for empowerment of girls and women; adult education, culture, and technology; and adult education for sustainable development. An agenda for the future was developed that included a framework for adult education and policy and program implementation recommendations. (Appended are a list of participants and the following presentations: "Inaugural Address and Keynote Speech," by Sukavich Rangistpol; "Welcome Address," by Kasama Varavarn; "Welcome Speech," by Victor Ordonez; "Speech," by Jamnian Saksakulthai; and "Briefing about the 1997 International Conference on Adult Education, Hamburg, Germany," by Paul Belanger.) (MN)

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ED 409 447

ASIA-PACIFIC PROGRAMME OF EDUCATION FOR ALL

APPEAL

Asia-Pacific Regional Conference on ADULT EDUCATION

FINAL REPORT

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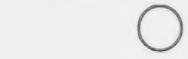

ASIA-PACIFIC
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Asia-Pacific Regional Consultation on

ADULT EDUCATION

Jomtien, Thailand
16-18 September 1996

FINAL REPORT

UNESCO

Jointly organized by

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and **Asia-Pacific Programme of Education for All (APPEAL)**
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Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

A. Background

The Regional Consultation on Adult Education has been organized jointly by the Department of Non-Formal Education, Thailand and UNESCO PROAP, Bangkok, in co-operation with the UNESCO Institute of Education, Hamburg from 16-18 September 1996 in Jomtien, Thailand

This regional consultation is preparatory to the Fifth International Conference on Adult Education which is scheduled to take place in Hamburg, Germany, from 14-18 July, 1997

Specific objectives of the Asia-Pacific Regional Consultation on Adult Education are:

a) To review the progress and trends on policies and programmes in adult and non-formal education since the Fourth International Conference on Adult Education, which was held in Paris in 1985;

b) To identify issues, problems and constraints about adult and non-formal education; and

c) To identify emerging priorities and future trends for effective promotion of adult and non-formal education in the region.

The consultation was attended by 101 specialists and professionals working in various fields of adult education from 20 countries, and representatives of 10 international organizations and agencies, including non-governmental organizations, universities and business sectors.

B. Inauguration

The regional consultation was inaugurated by His Excellency Mr. Sukavich Rangsitpol, Minister of Education, Royal Government of Thailand.

Dr. Kasama Varavarn, Director-General, Department of Non-Formal Education, delivered the welcome address. In her speech Dr. Kasama emphasized the need to redefine the role of adult education to meet the challenges of the future and she also stressed the importance of optimizing the benefit of adult education programmes to the specific target groups. The major issues she raised in this connection were:

- How can we become the transformative tool for future retraining?
- How the right to learn could be ensured for more learners without losing responsiveness to their needs?
- How modern technology could be utilized without losing our cultural roots?

Mrs. Jamnian Saksakulthai, Member of the Provincial Council, Yasodhorn Province, Thailand, as a graduate of the NFE system, spoke about the benefits that education has brought to herself, her family and the community.

Dr. Victor Ordonez, Director, UNESCO PROAP, welcomed the participants, on behalf of UNESCO. During his speech, he explained that although the percentage of literate population has increased, the absolute number of the illiterate people in the world has also been increasing. The UNESCO PROAP Director expressed his optimism that the deliberations and outputs of the consultation would contribute tangibly towards the preparation of the International Conference on Adult Education scheduled to take place in Hamburg in July 1997. Dr. Ordonez expressed his deep gratitude to the Department of Non-Formal Education for successfully hosting the regional consultation in Jomtien, Thailand and to all the participants for their interest and support.

H.E. Mr. Sukavich Rangsitpol, Minister of Education, Thailand, during his inaugural speech, emphasized that the entire educational system in Thailand needs to be reformed, to prepare the younger generation for the challenges of the future.

The Minister of Education dwelt on the progress Thai society has made economically during the last several years and explained how from the stage when its per capita income was only US$100 in 1971, it has now moved to a stage of per capita income of US$4,500. He attributed education as the main factor contributing to the accelerated economic development and the consequent differential per capita income in various regions of Thailand.

The Honourable Minister also elaborated on the need to formulate the short-term, medium-term and long-term objectives of education including adult education and how it should adapt to the changing scenario as Thailand advances in its educational development.

C. Procedures of the Regional Consultation

The three-day consultation was organized in plenary as well as several small group working sessions and roundtables.

During the first working session of the Consultation Meeting, a general overview presentation was made on adult education in Asia and the Pacific region, which consisted of a video presentation on Non-Formal Education in Thailand, and a presentation on EFA in the context of Adult Education by UNESCO, Bangkok, and survey results of a study of literature on adult education by the Academy of Educational Development (AED), Washington, D.C.

Immediately after that, a panel discussion was organized as follows:

a) Adult Education in the 21st Century – the Challenges Ahead, by Ms. Lalita Ramdas, President, International Council for Adult Education, Canada.

b) Adult Education and Four themes on Lifelong Learning in Japan by Mr. Yoshihiro Yamamoto, Researcher, National Institute for Educational Research, Japan.

They were then followed by small group discussions organized in four subregional groupings. During these small group discussions, participants exchanged and shared their experiences on adult education in their respective countries. Reports of each subregion were presented in the plenary. The group reports are given in the main body of this report.

On the second day, four roundtables were organized to discuss new programme thrusts and initiatives for adult education. These four topics were:

a) Adult education as a tool for poverty alleviation and improvement of quality of life;

b) Adult education for empowerment of girls and women;

c) Adult education, culture and technology; and

d) Adult education for sustainable development.

The reports of the four roundtables were presented in the plenary. They are included in Chapter 4 of this report.

The Drafting Committee met in several sessions. They pooled together: the experiences of the members represented in the committee; the matters raised in the sub-regional group meetings and in the plenary on sharing of country experiences and the reports of the four roundtables. They then prepared a Draft Declaration for Action. This was subsequently thoroughly examined by the sub-regional groups in the morning of the 18th September. Finally, with the inputs provided by the sub-regional groups, the Drafting Committee refined and finalized the Draft Declaration for submission to the final plenary.

D. Election of Officers and Drafting Committee

Participants at the conference unanimously elected the following delegates as office bearers:

1.	Mr. Vichai Tunsiri	(Thailand)	Chairperson
2.	Ms. Lalita Ramdas	(India)	Vice-Chairperson
3.	Ms. Galumalemana Nuufou Petaia	(Western Samoa)	Vice-Chairperson
4.	Mr. Mohammad Adnan	(Indonesia)	Vice-Chairperson
5.	Mr. Michael Woods	(New Zealand)	Rapporteur

The following representatives were elected by the four Subregional groups as members of the Drafting Committee:

SOUTH-EAST ASIA

1.	Mr. Nguyen Thi Thanh Nga	(Viet Nam)
2.	Mr. Igagani Serrano	(Philippines)

SOUTH ASIA

1.	Ms. Renuka Miskra	(India)
2.	Dr. Muhamad Hadi Gyari	(Pakistan)

PACIFIC

1.	Mrs. Nora Rameka	(New Zealand)
2.	Dr. Alastair Crombie	(Australia)

EAST ASIA

1.	Mr. Alisher Akhmedov	(Uzbekistan)
2.	Ms. Junko Kuninbu	(Japan)

E. Briefing about the 1997 International Conference on Adult Education

Immediately after the election of officers and members of the Drafting Committee, Mr. Paul Bélanger, Director, UNESCO Institute for Education, gave a briefing on the Fifth International Conference on Adult Education, which is scheduled to be held in Hamburg, Germany from 14 - 18 July 1997.

Chapter Two

ADULT EDUCATION IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

As part of the general review and sharing of experiences, the following activities were organized during the first day of the Consultation:

A. A General Review

During the first plenary of the Regional Consultation, a series of brief presentations were made to provide an overview on adult education in the region. A brief description of those presentations is given here:

(a) Video Presentation on Non-Formal Education in Thailand

In the world of globalization, lifelong learning, comprising formal, non-formal and informal education, is essential to help people all over the world to keep up with the changing trends. In Thailand, the Non-Formal Education Department (NFED) has attempted to promote and support lifelong learning by organizing various educational activities to respond to the needs and conditions of all target groups, particularly disadvantaged groups of people, i.e. people in slum areas, rural youths and women, remote rural people, poor children left out of the formal school system, etc.

By collaboration with many agencies, both governmental and non-governmental, NFED has succeeded in providing basic education, vocational courses, and current news and information for the people so that they can improve their quality of life. It is planned that a Lifelong Education Act will be proclaimed in Thailand in the near future, which will ensure all people have access to education throughout their lifetime.

(b) Basic Education for All and Adult Education

There are 625 million illiterates in Asia and the Pacific, which is 71 per cent of the world's illiterates; and 74 million children of 6-11 age group, which is 50 per cent of the world's children, who are expected to remain unenrolled in primary schools. Of those who are illiterate, 64 per cent are women and 66 per cent of children unenrolled in primary schools are girls. A very large segment of these illiterates and unschooled children are in the Southern Asian countries.

Experiences of countries which have made significant progress in basic education have shown that parental and community interest and readiness is a key to ensuring children's education. As a high priority, it is therefore imperative that communities and parents are empowered to become literate and participate in adult and continuing education so that they will in turn serve as an effective and sound basis for creating demand for and sustaining 'literacy and basic education for all' at the community level.

Increasingly, it is realized now in the region that the goal of 'basic education for all' cannot be attained through formal primary schooling provisions alone. While it is understood that formal primary schooling serves as a main channel for ensuring basic education of children in the normal sense of the term, it is important to note that it also tends to exclude those whose socio-economic and geographic contexts and educational needs are different to the formally defined objectives. It is particularly for this reason that the concept of primary schooling needs to be broadened so that it addresses the needs of those who have not been reached by the regular primary schooling programmes. A variety of less formal and/or non-formal and alternative forms of primary schooling provisions would need to be developed and popularized.

It maybe recalled that the World Conference on Education for All held in Jomtien, in March 1990 outlined, **"every person - child, youth and adult - shall be able to benefit from educational opportunities designed to meet their basic learning needs."**

There are a number of terms or phrases that describe activities that involve the education of adults. These are:

i. **Literacy Education** is probably the most prominent connotation of adult education, at least in the South Asian region. In countries that are economically less developed, it can generally be said that their focus in adult education will be literacy training programmes. Many of the countries under analysis have initiated mass literacy programmes to address such concerns.

ii. **Non-Formal Education** (NFE) is a general term that is often associated with adult education programmes, though the terminology can actually refer to activities for younger people as well. Increasingly, NFE is being recognized in more and more countries of the region as an important educational strategy for achieving the goal of 'basic education for all'.

iii. **Vocational/Technical Education** are terms that refer to educational programmes that are designed to enhance particular skills or job performance for participants.

iv. **Lifelong Learning** is a term used for the objective of having citizens continue the educational process on their own. In recent days the concept of lifelong learning is starting to gain momentum in many countries of the region.

v. **Continuing Education** is another term that has various meanings depending on the country. Broadly, it refers to the continuing efforts to maintain literacy among the "neo-literate" or newly literate population.

(c) APPEAL and its Contributions to Adult Education

As part of its global strategy for literacy and basic education for all, UNESCO launched in 1987 the Asia and Pacific Programme of Education for All (APPEAL). The fundamental mission of APPEAL is to contribute to the effective promotion of 'literacy and basic education for all'. The main target groups for APPEAL's programmes have been girls and women, children, youth and adults, and those under-served and unreached in remote rural and depressed urban areas.

APPEAL has been a major milestone in the collective effort towards achieving EFA in the region. During the nine years since its inception, APPEAL, through its inter-country co-operative programmes, has made several important contributions in support of literacy and continuing education in the region. Its major contributions are:

i. Development of Exemplar Literacy Materials

APPEAL has accorded special emphasis to developing and producing exemplar literacy materials targeted at youth and adults, with special reference to women, disadvantaged and under-served population groups.

ii. Training of Literacy Personnel

With a view to improving the situation regarding literacy personnel, APPEAL, in co-operation with the Member States, developed, tested and produced a series of twelve volumes of Training Materials for Literacy Personnel (ATLP). The ATLP Manuals are being used to train literacy personnel through regional, sub-regional, and national training programmes supported by APPEAL. Several national, sub-national and inter-country training and development activities have also been organized and supported by APPEAL.

iii. Continuing Education Materials

Through a series of Technical Working Meetings of Experts, APPEAL has developed a series of Training Materials for Continuing Education Personnel (ATLP-CE) covering the themes of post-literacy, equivalency, quality of life improvement, income generation, individual interest and future oriented continuing education programmes.

APPEAL has also developed four volumes which relate to planning and management of continuing education.

iv. Pilot Projects for the Promotion of Literacy for Youth and Adults

APPEAL has supported a series of pilot projects aimed at assisting in the promotion of literacy and continuing education among youth and adults notably in Bhutan, China, India, Laos, Nepal and Viet Nam. These projects aim to mobilize the available physical and human resources, including learning facilities, local manpower and expertise, and to encourage local ownership in order to promote literacy at a village community level for disadvantaged groups.

(d) Experiences in Adult Education in the Asia-Pacific Region

This presentation is based on review of the literature on adult education in the Asia/Pacific Region and on the *Country Notes* prepared for this conference by Thailand, the Philippines, Viet Nam, Papua New Guinea, and Cambodia.

The Asia/Pacific Region is characterized by a great diversity of needs in adult education. Some countries are mired in continuing poverty and have large numbers of unschooled or under-schooled adults. These countries are concentrating on basic literacy programs. Other countries in the region have reached the highest technological ranks. These countries are striving to prepare their adults to adapt to a rapidly changing economic environment. The region also has countries all over the scale between these two extremes. Still, adult education is a continuum and all countries can be learning from successful strategies found everywhere in the region.

Adult Education: Why? How? For Whom?

Governments have many objectives — overt and covert — in implementing adult education. Most of the countries mention economic development and skills improvement as reasons for providing adult education. Some mention empowerment to improve social well-being. China is using adult education to help move the country towards modernization. Uzbekistan states that it needs re-education of its population in order to move to a free market economy. The Minister of Education from Thailand sees adult education as a critical contribution to an improved human resource base. There also seem to be covert reasons why countries invest in adult education. These may include literacy associated with liberation struggles, to promote a particular political party, or to reintegrate into the economy and society large numbers of military youth after a war. Multilateral donors also drive the agenda in terms of what countries will undertake. If adult education is on the donor agenda, countries may try to attract those funds. The important point here is to acknowledge the objectives so that adequate funding and accurate monitoring of the progress towards those objectives can be made.

How Do Countries Implement Adult Education?

China, Viet Nam and many other countries in the region have undertaken mass literacy campaigns. The literature shows that these campaigns are very effective in generating national enthusiasm for tackling the problem of illiteracy. These campaigns are only possible in countries where there is strong political will and an institutional infrastructure to translate the goals into action. The gains may be short-lived, however, without follow-up.

Functional literacy programs link literacy to livelihood. Thailand, the Philippines and most other countries have moved to implement functional literacy programs. These focus on target groups, are more customized to their needs, reach fewer people than mass literacy and are more costly. They may result in improved retention of literacy skills and may retain the interest and attendance of the learners longer than mass literacy campaigns.

Continuing education links literacy to post-literacy. If adults learn to read but do not have access to material that is interesting and at an appropriate level to read, they are likely to relapse into illiteracy. Malaysia won an award for producing a rural newspaper for neo-literates. Thailand has a nationwide system of village newspaper reading centres which were established to strengthen the commercial delivery network of reading materials to rural communities.

Of course, all adult education should use strategies, teaching methodologies and materials designed for the adult learner.

Who's Been Missed?

It will come as no surprise that in this region, women are far more likely than men to be illiterate. In fact, two out of every three illiterates are women. Aside from a minority of middle-class women who had some access to education, the masses of women have been shut out of the system. Most, if not all, governments now realize that it is essential that women be educated to break the vicious cycle of poverty, ill health, and low productivity. If not, they are less likely to send their own daughters to school. The literature strongly suggests that women do not want education only in domestic matters. They want a relevant curriculum that will lead to income-producing skills.

Other groups that have been missed include hard-to-reach populations in remote or isolated areas, urban slums, ethnic minorities and disabled adults. More research is needed on how to reach these groups, but one thing is clear: they are often not politically powerful and the political will necessary to institute programs for them is not always present. Ironically, the groups themselves are sometimes the barrier to education, in that they do not always recognize the need for education themselves. We need to know more about successful strategies for reaching these groups. The literature has more information on children than on the adults.

What Are the Key Program Components?

Policy-level planning: It is important to acknowledge the true objectives of the program and to be honest about the resources and infrastructure necessary to carry it out. The *Country Notes*, in almost all cases, stated very lofty, even constitutionally-state goals, but in every case, funding was inadequate to meet the goals.

Who is at the table when policies are being made? Are all the possible partners and the learners themselves participating in setting the standards, developing the curricula, and establishing monitoring and evaluation systems?

Who are Potential Partners?

Ministries of Education everywhere have lean budgets. Partnerships may be formed with other ministries–agriculture, labor, women's issues–which may have small pots of training funds that may be tapped for adult education. These same ministries can certainly contribute to the development of relevant curricula. NGOs have a long tradition of working in adult education. They provide excellent materials, in some cases, instructors, and a superb understanding of the learner groups. Universities and research institutions can be useful partners in providing pre- and in-service instructor training, in developing evaluation and monitoring systems, and in conducting impact assessments on best practices. International donors can also be useful beyond supplying much needed funding. They can share best practices from around the world and provide technical assistance in policies and planning. Private companies are proving to be excellent partners in some countries, by giving employees release time to attend continuing education classes. The mass media can help raise awareness of the need for adult education and provide distance education. The most important partners may be the learners themselves. In China, Viet Nam and Indonesia, villages help identify learners' needs, organize learning groups, and provide facilities for some programs.

One caveat about partnerships: while they are essential, strong management of the efforts is needed. A central unit of one or more agencies need to be designated to oversee overall planning, and set policies and standards to ensure efficient use of resources and quality control.

What Structures Should be Built into Programs?

Ongoing evaluation and follow-up will help a country decide when a program needs revision. It can set the baseline against which progress can be measured. Donors and development agencies such as the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, and UNICEF are supporting the development of management information systems for countries such as Cambodia, Laos and Viet Nam. UNESCO is supporting several countries in the development of education indicators.

Pre- and in-service training is essential because adult teaching methodologies are different from the normal pre-service curriculum, and because many adult education instructors are paraprofessionals, drawn from other jobs.

A life-oriented curriculum is another structure that helps ensure program success. The curriculum must be more than just basic education to maintain the interests of most adults. Australia and many other countries are seeking to link remedial instruction to vocational skills.

What are the Hurdles?

Resource allocation is the biggest constraint to successful programming, according to the literature and the *Country Notes*. On this point, we have mentioned partnerships with both government and NGOs, and certainly donors. The literature lacks solid research on the returns to society from investing in adult education. The lessons learned from the advocacy work on women's and girls' education and on primary education in general have taught us that ministries of finance are much more convinced by the cost-benefit analyses than by equity arguments. When this case is made successfully, budgets may increase.

Teacher availability is a problem. The regions are remote; professionals are scarce. Paraprofessionals are drawn from village leaders, extension workers and even, in a Thai prison literacy program, from guards and inmates. The learner groups, after they have become literate themselves, may prove to be one resource for instructors, since they are more likely to speak the language and to remain in the remote areas. In-service training for these groups is essential.

Lessons for adults must be tied to something relevant to the learners' lives. A strong monitoring system will provide useful guidance in determining the most compelling curriculum. And cultural barriers will have to be addressed. It will take extra effort to reach some of these culturally isolated groups with appropriate programming.

What are the Trends for the Future?

In the ten years since the last International Conference on Adult Education in Paris, it can be generally said that the countries of the Asia/Pacific Region are moving towards literacy; formalizing vocational and life needs of learners, and ensuring their efforts with continuing education. Illiteracy in the region has declined as a percentage, even though it continues to rise in real numbers. Adult education programming is increasingly centred on vocational education and jobs skills. And there are more efforts to provide continuing education.

Finally, technology is the wave of the future. Some countries, such as Japan, Australia, Korea and New Zealand, are fortunate enough to have access to new technologies. They will have to take care that everyone has access to these new skills so the gaps between the wealthy and the poor do not grow. A debate on the gap that may occur between the more and the less developed countries as regards technology should also take place to ensure that these new tools do not result in greater disparities.

B. A Panel Presentation

a) Adult Education in the 21st Century – The Challenges Ahead

by ***Mrs. Lalita Ramdas***
President, International Council for Adult Education, Canada

Mrs Lalita Ramdas, President of the International Council for Adult Education, introduced herself by enumerating the many roles she has – learner, practitioner, educator, woman, wife, mother and grandmother – and the need to juggle all the demands of such roles. She suggested that in much the same way as an individual faced an identity crisis, today the adult education movement was in crisis.

Her presentation revolved around five points:

1) The gains of the NGOs in the field of adult education;
2) The definition and practice of adult education;
3) The politics of adult education;
4) The issues in relation to gender equality; and
5) Making the learner visible in the educational process.

Mrs Ramdas noted that, compared to her experience at the World Conference on Education for ALL (WCEFA) in Jomtien in 1990, where the NGOs were marginalized, six years later, NGOs were acknowledged and recognized, sitting side by side with government representatives in this meeting. She also narrated how the NGOs planned a March 8 (International Women's Day) event at the 1990 Jomtien Conference, where, although EFA talked about the importance of women and girls, the official conference failed to celebrate such a critical date.

In this connection, Mrs Ramdas stressed the importance of regional and international NGO networks, where ICAE is such a successful example. A lead agency in the global movement for adult education for NGOs, it works with networks in six regions - ASPBAE (Asia), AALAE (Africa), EAEA (Europe), CARCAE (Caribbean), ALESCO (Arab region) and NAPAE (North America). Presently, the ICAE has national and sectoral members from over 83 countries. Furthermore, it enjoys consultative status with UNESCO. At the moment, ICAE has taken responsibility for mobilizing NGOs in different parts of the world to work closely with UNESCO and government agencies, in preparing an adult education agenda for Hamburg in 1997.

Regarding the definition and practices of adult education, Mrs. Ramdas pointed to the various meanings it has to different people with a broad range of understandings in relation to the concept, scope and focus, and this consequently had implications in its application and practice across the world. She then quoted the UNESCO definition of adult education — "the entire body of organized educational processes, whatever the content, level and method, whether formal or otherwise, whether they prolong or replace initial education in schools, colleges and universities, as well as in apprenticeship, whereby persons regarded as adult by the society to

which they belong — develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge, improve their technical and professional qualifications, or turn them in a new direction to bring about changes in their attitudes or behaviour in the two-fold perspective of full personal development and participation in balanced and independent social, economic and cultural development (Nairobi, 1976)." The Fifth International Conference on Adult Education (Confintia) is indeed one venue where the definition and practices of adult education could be revisited and critically assessed. For example, in the context of demands of technology and information development, the role of vocational education and the kind of linkages to other forms of adult education has to be re-examined. Given the range of practices of adult education, there is a need to broaden and expand the scope and definition to include community education and popular education, as well as all education components of different action groups, whether it be around gender, environment, peace and human rights.

In the politics of adult education, it was stressed that adult education needs to be reinforced in the governments, as it has been observed that there is a lack of political will in strengthening this field. One of the important ramifications of this lack of commitment is the low prioritization when it comes to budgetary allocation. There is a need to find ways of reinforcing the economic value of the cumulative sum of adult education activities taking place around the world. Furthermore, adult education must also position itself strongly and publicly as the key factor in the achievement of EFA goals. A related issue is the extent to which adult education, as practiced by NGOs, can push for democratization in communities, as well as transform power relations in different levels. One of several challenges to adult education is to address the enormous gaps between rich and poor, and to articulate a new transformatory vision of the world we want to create.

The inter-related issues of women's empowerment and the incorporation of a gender perspective in adult education continue to pose the biggest challenge for practitioners. For example, while acknowledging the conditions of women's oppression and marginalization, there is also the need to highlight women as active agents of change, who have the capacity not only to transform themselves but society as well.

Finally, adult education has to put the learners in the centre, where their processes and indigenous knowledge are respected and acknowledged. This means doing away with the stigmatization of the "illiterate" and re-examination of the "deficiency" discourse commonly disseminated. In many countries, adult education is treated as synonymous with adult literacy, whereas Adult Education has a far greater potential and capacity and must be utilized appropriately.

b) Adult Education and Lifelong Learning in Japan

by ***Yoshihiro Yamamoto***
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The term 'lifelong learning' as used in Japan, 'the whole of human life from birth until death', including:

- formal learning at school;
- non-formal learning within the community or at educational institutions and companies outside of school; and
- informal learning conducted elsewhere including the home environment.

Therefore, in accordance with the newly introduced Course of Study for Elementary Schools in 1992 and for Lower Secondary Schools in 1993, the central aim of school education was focused on cultivating a foundation for lifelong learning, which extended beyond basic education in encouraging pupils to discover their own individual interests, to persistently pursue challenges, find solutions and generally enhance their ability to further their own education.

(i) Policies for Lifelong Learning

The policy for lifelong learning is being developed in Japan at three different levels of the state, the prefecture and the municipality, with the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (MOESC) taking the leadership. The problems of the role concerning lifelong learning activities played respectively by the local public bodies and by the firms or private foundations are also presented in the report, together with several emerging issues that urge policy-makers to work out solutions. In Japan, the policy for lifelong education is called the policy for 'lifelong learning', and this policy has evolved from the basic policy for school education.

Furthermore, in order to realize the proposal for lifelong learning in 1990, the MOESC enacted the Law Concerning the Development of Mechanisms and Measures for the promotion of Lifelong Learning.

The main content of this law was intended to

(i) support the mechanisms and means for promoting lifelong learning in the prefectures, and

(ii) prepare the basic planning provisions for the development of lifelong learning in specially designated communities, and lastly

(iii) establish a Council for Lifelong Learning within the MOESC.

Moreover, learning in each prefecture is also recommended with the objective of perfecting the framework for lifelong learning at the prefectural level. It was as a result of this new law, therefore, that the National Council for Lifelong Learning was established in 1990, in order to further facilitate the deliberation and implementation of new policies for lifelong learning.

(ii) Lifelong Learning Policies of the Local Public Bodies

The Prefectural Level

As of 1988, the creation of a systematic framework for lifelong learning was carried out in all the prefectural districts, and with the inclusion of government departments, all of those either had installed the structure for the promotion of lifelong learning or were already in the planning stages, and 27 prefectures already possessed a promotion centre for lifelong learning activities.

These prefectural policies for lifelong learning are focused primarily on the establishment of a systematic framework, the expansion of lifelong learning opportunities, and the training and support of supervisors and instructors. On the other hand, in order to introduce a systematic framework, there has been the establishment of a Council for the Promotion of Lifelong Learning involving both members of the government and ordinary people entrusted with discussing the comprehensive agenda for lifelong learning, followed by the establishment of a Committee for the Promotion of Lifelong Learning which is entrusted with the examination of the actual agenda, and in accordance with these decisions regarding the framework, there is a policy to create a Head Agency for the promotion of policies.

Local Municipal Government Level

In contrast to the development of a system of lifelong learning at the prefectural level, there is even less systematic promotion at the local government level. It appears that as of 1995, although 32 per cent of cities, towns and villages in Japan, have already established measures for the promotion of lifelong learning planning, there were 59 per cent which already had councils for the promotion of lifelong learning. Nine per cent of the local governments responded that they had no governmental organizations for lifelong learning.

Institutions and Programmes

Providers of learning opportunities for adult learners in Japan can be divided into the following four categories: schools/higher education institutions; companies and vocational education institutions; public educational institutions such as citizens' public halls; social education centres; and private educational institutions such as culture centres. Although these various institutions are not necessarily well co-ordinated among themselves, and sometimes restrict opportunities for advancing from one institution to another, it can still be maintained, however, that they are respectively supporting the learning activities of adult learners.

Schools/Higher Education Institutions

As for the characteristic features of adult education at schools/higher education institutions in Japan, these may be outlined as follows:

Firstly, there is a correspondence course system in universities and junior colleges, and a number of part-time/correspondence courses in upper-secondary schools. However, there has been a reduction in the number of students at all of these educational establishments, and effective ways of bringing about innovations appropriate to a lifelong learning society are still being sought.

Secondly, there is flexibility in the system of gaining credits. In the latter half of secondary education, the establishment of credit-based upper secondary schools has been promoted, with the result that 23 such schools were established by 1991, and an additional 13 schools in 1992.

Thirdly, as for learning opportunities offered outside the formal curriculum, the system of extension courses is a representative example.

Companies and Vocational Education Institutions

With regard to the main vocational training offered by companies and vocational education institutions, this may be arranged into the following two categories:

Firstly, there are vocational education programmes offered by private institutions within companies. These include both on the job training (OJT) and off the job training (Off-JT) offered by each company to their employees, in addition to private, specialized institutions of vocational training and a wide range of vocational education offered by business circles within the world of industry.

Secondly, there are learning opportunities at public vocational training institutions under the Ministry of Labour. In this regard, as well as the variety of vocational training programmes given in public vocational training institutions, as specified by the Human Resources Development Promotion Law, there are also a number of specialized educational training institutions under the jurisdiction of various bureaus within the national ministries and municipalities.

Public Educational Institutions

Firstly, there are the social education divisions of the boards of education in the local (prefectural and municipal) governments and the learning opportunities within the jurisdiction of the social education facilities under the boards of education. In this connection, 252,000 courses have been established with 12,907,000 course participants.

Secondly, there are the bureaus within the local governments outside of the board of education, and the facilities for learning opportunities under their jurisdiction. These account for 170,000 courses, and 9,987,000 participants, which is only slightly less than and almost equal in scale to the learning opportunities offered by the boards of education.

Private Educational Institutions

The learning opportunities that are offered amount to about 55,000 courses with a total of 1,380,000 course participants.

Four particular issues need to be urgently tackled, namely:

- Promotion of recurrent education;
- Fostering of and support for volunteer programs;
- Enrichment of out-of-school programmes for youth; and
- Enhancement of learning opportunities dealing with emergency tasks and issues such as human rights, aging population, international co-operation, environmental problems, and highly informed society, etc.

(iii) Future Trends

Co-ordination and Co-operation between Public and Private Bodies in Japan

Lastly, to make lifelong learning system and support it, we need to co-operate with the private sector. There is another supporting system of lifelong educational activities conducted by the private sector. In addition to the programmes conducted by companies for their employees, culture centres are also representative of the lifelong educational activities of the private sector, especially in the urban areas. Furthermore, other conventional programme providers in the private sector such as temples, churches, YMCAs, YWCAs and so on have now begun to embrace the concept of lifelong learning, while still adhering to their respective original objectives. Also, there have arisen a large number of private, non-profit learning circles in the fields of culture, sports and leisure, with some of these developing from study groups originally formed in the Citizens' Public Halls.

In general, the system of support of the local public bodies for the private education groups with regard to the promotion of lifelong learning is rather insubstantial, and it is therefore greatly desirable that the co-ordination and co-operation between the local public bodies and the private education groups/foundations in terms of role, administration, programme, and finance is enhanced to fill the existing gaps in these respects.

In particular, the question of which areas of lifelong learning should be the responsibility of the local public bodies and which areas should come under the private sector, and to what extent, is gaining in importance against the background of the current economic recession.

For example, in Japan, there are many learning enterprises based upon mass media companies or department stores, etc. These learning enterprises called culture centres, number has more than 600 in all areas in Japan and conduct many classes. Those classes and centres are increasing year by year and there is a problem of competition with public learning facilities.

On the other hand, the government has a role to foster this private sector activity and to extend and empower the public sector. Perhaps, the most important task is to make the infrastructure and to meet the expectations from the private sector by having more programmes for training staff for lifelong learning.

C. Sharing of Country Experiences

The sharing of country experiences was organized in four small groups by sub-regions, namely, South Asia, Southeast Asia, East and Central Asia and the Pacific. Emerging issues identified by these four groups were presented at the plenary followed by discussions. A summary of the presentations by the four groups is as follows:

South Asia

Session 1: Open discussion

a) Literacy

- Literacy is to be viewed as a human value, a human right.
- Literacy can be an end in itself, but can also be a force of social change; it can be a force that deals with explanation and manipulation.
- Literacy is difficult to market without rewards, e.g. income generation skills.

b) Literacy as a Continuum:

- Literacy must start at very basic levels. Learning to read and recognize the alphabet must take precedence over basic numeracy and life skills which must, in turn, precede wider definition and aims.

c) Political Will and Commitment:

- A strong sense of political commitment at national policy level is vital to literacy and adult education.

- NGOs must not be asked to assume all responsibility of adult education.

d) Retention:

- A question:
  how long do neo-literates maintain their literacy?

e) National Policy

- Every country must have its own AE/literacy policies.

f) Other Issues:

- There is a need for greater decentralization.
- Quality of teachers/instructors needs to be improved and sustained.
- Where do national/allocated resources go?
- The need to draw on mutual and individual experience, creation of a platform to do so within the region.
- Gender issues need to be focused on; gender perspective should be integrated in all adult education efforts; training materials.
- The South Asian countries (especially Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and Nepal) are trying to deal on the mass scale.

g) A Crucial Question

- We have been engaged in formalized adult education since the 1960s. Are we aware of what we have learnt up to now? Have we actually helped people? How?

Session 2: Focused Discussion

a) Observations

- There are regional differences, eg. in literacy.
- There are regional commonalities, eg. in social changes.
- Thus, the need for individualized strategy but commonality of policy is evident.
- Resourcing, training, monitoring research and co-ordination need to be examined in greater detail and optimized.
- Greater focus needs to be given to disadvantaged population groups.

- Despite a wide diversity in the on-going adult education programmes in countries in the region, the group arrived at a broad conceptual framework indicating the common current trends. The major concerns in the current trends are:

    - Broadening the scope of adult education to include diversification of economic activities on the one hand and social activities on the other.
    - Making all adult education initiatives gender sensitive.
    - Making adult literacy campaigns and country-based activities for universal primary education mutually supportive.
    - Linking post literacy and post primary continuing education and retraining present workforce diversifying the open learning system.
    - Articulating the education and entrepreneurship development needs of the participants of poverty alleviation programmes.
    - Devolving greater responsibility to community based bodies in planning and implementing adult education programmes, forging a GO-NGO community perspective.

b) A Vision for the Future

It was proposed that

- We need to formulate and articulate a vision for adult education in the region.
- We need to consolidate our common strengths and experiences.
- We need to keep our target groups (the disadvantaged) in focus and work towards helping them by addressing all efforts to influence policy and politics.
- We need to ask ourselves and seek an answer to the questions:
  what is adult education/given the status quo in our part of the world vis-a-vis illiteracy, poverty etc. What exactly are our priorities?
- With this in mind, how can we apply our past experiences and strengths to consolidate a stronger political will to address the issues at hand. How can we optimize the often meager resources at our disposal.
- We need to understand that investment in adult education is always worth the return and that it is not just a cost.

1996 is the SAARC year of literacy. There is a conference due to take place in Delhi, India. The focus is on NGOs. We can also use this year for greater focus and concrete activities.

Southeast Asia

"The Southeast Asia Working Group on Adult Education was composed of officials from Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam, as well as representatives from a number of Non-Governmental Organizations and International Organizations based in these countries

The discussion was focused on three fundamental aspects of Adult Education:

a) Development Goals,
b) Implementation,
c) Approaches and Methodologies. Some main issues raised were the importance of adult education as a means for awareness-raising regarding critical issues like HIV/AIDS and sustainable use of the environment.

Furthermore, the importance of linkages between adult education and sustainable development was emphasised. This can be done by creating functional literacy programmes specifically adapted to the target group, be it women, ethnic groups or displaced people.

a) Development Goals

Adult Education is seen as a means to improve the quality of life and provide preventive education on health and environment issues. Furthermore, the promotion of human rights, as well as the empowerment of marginalised groups were underscored.

- Quality of Life

It is essential to create functional literacy programmes, where literacy skills are combined with instruction on work skills. This has been done in some countries in the region by promoting income generating activities in the programmes and by incorporating vocational skills training for the improvement of quality of life. Several countries have also combined adult education with the establishment of credit schemes from local banks.

- Human Rights (Peace, Security and Democracy)

The importance of education for human rights was stressed, especially when establishing programmes for vulnerable groups. Furthermore, the need of mutual understanding and tolerance is crucial in the area, especially since Southeast Asia has multiple ethnic groups belonging to different cultural and religious contexts.

- Empowerment of Marginalised Groups

Adult Education should address Vulnerable Groups in the society in order to promote equality. Small ethnic groups have often been marginalised in the recent economic development in the region and do not participate at a satisfactory rate in the formal school system or in decision-making in the societies. Migrant workers, displaced people, as well as relocated people are often marginalised by their host society. Special programmes for these people will facilitate their integration into the local society and should promote mutual understanding and tolerance.

Furthermore, gender inequity in most societies of Southeast Asia hinders the promotion of women in development. Gender issues should be integrated in all aspects of development.

Finally, Adult Education should contribute to awareness raising against child abuse, with a special focus on prevention of sexual abuse of children.

- Health and Environment

Adult Education should be preventive, and clearly promote awareness on HIV/AIDS. Other aspects of health issues should also be prompted, such as nutrition and family planning. Adult education should be designed to address disaster issues with a focus on preventing activities. Awareness raising regarding unexploded ordnances (UXO) and landmines should be integrated in the learning programme in relevant countries in the region.

Environmental education should be provided at all levels of society in order to reduce negative impact on the environment and to prevent long-term damage.

b) Approaches and Methodologies

Different strategies are suitable to the implementation of the goals listed above. It is important to use an approach adapted to the target group, so as to enhance the efficiency and the quality of the programme. Useful approaches to Adult Education in Southeast Asia include modern means of communication, such as the use of distance education and information technology. Several stakeholders, however, do not have access to new technology. The education provided for these groups should be adapted to the cultural background of each concerned community.

- Distance Education

Distance education can be provided by television and video, correspondence courses, rural press, radio and other means of communication. It can be used for different kinds of adult education, basic education and awareness raising, as well as higher education. Several countries in the region have successfully implemented distance education programmes.

Furthermore, another aspect of modern information and educational means, is information technology. This constitutes an important issue which addresses the question about the technical level of the region.

- Indigenous Approaches

Several groups do not have access to modern technology, and it is important to build an adult education programme that does not exclude these groups. Therefore, it is important to take into account the cultural heritage and identity of the group, in order to create new programmes that are adapted to the target group. Often, it is necessary to use a more holistic approach, including the spiritual dimension of the learners. Innovation, creativity and flexibility will be useful characteristics for adult education in the future.

- Quality and Quantity

In conclusion, the adult education should focus on both quantitative aspects and qualitative aspects. The processes of implementing the programmes should be as participatory and community-centred as possible, in order to tailor-suit the education to the target groups.

Additionally, the programmes should build capacity to implement the programmes, by providing high quality training of adult education personnel, on all levels. It is particularly important to include grassroots community leaders in this process.

c) Implementing the Strategies

The actual accomplishment of the strategies will need implementing bodies, political will and commitment, as well as planning and resources.

- Implementing Bodies

The selected strategies will be implemented by different organizations, such as Government organizations, NGOs, international orgranizations and also, in some cases, the private sector. Community institutions and academic institutions are also effective implementing agents.

- Political Will — Commitment

There is a need of more priority to adult education on national levels. In most of the countries in the region, adult education does not receive the needed resources to implement programmes adapted to the local needs. Most countries face a crucial need of allocations both financial and human in this sector.

- Policy Issues

Finally, several countries lack a comprehensive plan for adult education. It is important to create a policy focused on delivery of the selected goals for adult education.

In the future, it is to be hoped that the policy makers for adult education will reflect the goals of sustainable development for all.

East/Central Asia

a) Context of Adult Education

i) Literacy and Functional Literacy

This is still a big issue of adult education even in those industrial countries. Computer literacy skills/knowledge to manage technological change has become a new functional aspect of adult education in those countries.

ii) Equivalency Programmes

These programmes give second learning chances for out-of school youth and adults to get primary/secondary educational qualifications recognized and enhance their empowerment in their society. China, Republic of Korea and Macau have already legislation to support the equivalency of those methodologies, which are quite different from those for formal schooling.

iii) Vocational/On-the-Job training

Almost all countries in the sub-region have this area of adult education, which aims at economic development and improving employment of the productive population.

iv) Education for Groups with Special Needs

Vulnerable groups like out-of school young adults, elderly, disabled, etc. need education to empower them. Women's education has been recognized as a must in most countries in the sub-region.

v) Academic/Professional Continuing Education

This part of continuing education is quite popular in those industrialized countries since employers need to upgrade themselves to compete in the world of work. China and Russia pay special attention to this because of the open market economy in these countries nowadays.

vi) Social, Cultural and /or Civil Education

Education relating to social life, family life, conserving and appreciation of traditional culture, knowing the civic rights and responsibilities relating to the country/community are the topics around which adult education is commonly organized in countries in this sub-region.

vii) Social Issues/Movement-oriented Adult-Education

This is a new trend of adult education in the sub-region resulting from NGO peoples' movement and the issues have become a new challenge to adult education.

b) Problems and Issues of Adult Education

i) Problems

- Adult education is still the smallest brother of the education family; the low status and low recognition by government and/or general public is a problem to be solved;
- Lack of financial resources and skillful and knowledgeable human resources is common in countries in the sub-region;
- The narrow scope concerning adult education as literacy work and skill training needs to be changed. A strict division of labour inside government has played a role in creating this narrow scope;
- Because of the cultural impact, there is also a need to explore unique theory and methodology in the sub-region or even in each country;
- Legislation is playing an important part, not only for NGOs, but for GOs to guarantee the importance of adult education in the community. This is a common concern in the sub-region; and
- "Time" and "Motivation" for learning, especially in the busy metropolitan lifestyle, is also a problem that needs to be overcome by adult education.

ii) Issues and Themes

The issues and themes identified by the group discussion, with reference to the East Asian countries consultation undertaken by the Asian-South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education (ASPBAE) are:

- Women's empowerment education and gender training;
- Migrant workers' education
- Environmental education for sustainable development;
- Spiritual and values education for human development;
- Computer literacy and managing technological change;
- Distance education and flexible learning methods for adults; and
- Education for vulnerable groups with special needs, those being the elderly, out-of-school young adults, people who are disabled, and ethnic minorities. .

The above are responding to the phenomenon of the fast tempo of living in the well-off countries, and also, because of that , migrant workers need to go to work in those countries from other sub-regions. Adult education needs to not only address the need to adapt to technological change, but the recovery of humanity to people.

c) Strategies to Tackle Problems and Issues

The following are proposed strategies to tackle the identified problems and issues:

- To upgrade the status and public recognition through advocacy, lobbying and public education;
- To encourage governments to distribute funds reasonably to adult education, as well as to find new ways of funding adult education;
- To promote more co-operation between educational institutes, GOs and NGOs;
- To promote research on theory, methodology, pedagogy, etc, on adult education in individual countries;
- To use legislation as a strategy for a genuine lifelong education system;
- To strengthen international networking of adult educators for the promotion and advocacy of adult education;
- To promote more international exchange, especially exchange between countries with similar cultural and economic contexts;
- To promote adult education to deal with critical social issues and vulnerable groups in need;
- To encourage governments, multinational corporations, funding agencies and international agencies to give out information correctly and openly, so that related adult education programmes can be facilitated better;
- To promote more useful training programmes for adult education personnel; and
- To experiment and exchange methods and pedagogy that can motivate adult learning.

The Pacific

Introduction

The countries represented in the discussion included New Zealand (indigenous and non-indigenous), PNG, Western Samoa and Australia (indigenous and non-indigenous). The discussion covered a range of adult education programmes in the areas of women's education, health, literacy, indigenous education, ESL, personal development, vocational education, distance and rural education, access programmes, and adults in formal educational institutions. Two papers were tabled, one from the Federation of Independent Aboriginal Education Programmes, and one from the ASPBAE South Pacific Regional Consultation held in Sydney in June 1996. A number of issues were identified by participants and these were listed in order, with some comments from other countries.

Overall, however, it is important to note the diversity in the region, for example among the participants and countries there were colonizers and those who had been colonized, indigenous and non-indigenous people, highly industrialized and less industrialized, highly urbanized and predominantly rural populations. The list presented below should be seen in this context.

Issues

a) Consolidation and Nationalization of Effort Needed

In both PNG and Western Samoa, for example, there is a great deal of activity in the areas of literacy, hygiene, nutrition, women's rights, agriculture and so on, but this is not co-ordinated in any way, which results in duplication of effort. In particular, there is a need for government support to effectively co-ordinate the efforts of a range of providers.

b) Dialogue Between Stockholders

There is a need to build links between different providers and all participants in the process of non-formal education.

c) Appropriate Technology

The point made here is that technology should always be used judiciously and appropriately to the educational circumstances.

d) Diversity of Providers

Adults learn in a vast number of formal and non-formal contexts e.g. in neighbourhood houses, evening colleges, schools, polytechnics, universities, technical and vocational colleges, community adult education centres, schools, workplace training programmes, and in programmes developed by ministries outside the education portfolio (e.g. Women's Affairs, Health, Agriculture and Fisheries, Attorney General's department). This means that adult education crosses sectoral boundaries and therefore does not have a clear identity as a separate sector. Once again there needs to be some mechanism for co-ordinating adult education effort and for representing this effort in the political and policy development process.

e) Misplaced Resources

Resources do not always reach targeted groups and are then accessed and controlled by middle class, well educated sectors of society.

f) Accountability

The adult education sector needs to develop an approach to accountability which demonstrates outcomes.

g) Indigenous Ownership and Control

In both New Zealand and Australia there is a need to value indigenous people's knowledge, and recognize the validity of programmes, aiming to meet their needs.

h) Recognition of Prior Learning

This is seen as crucial to providing pathways for disadvantaged people to gain access to education and employment. It acknowledges that learning can occur in communities, family life, workplaces, and non-formal settings; and that this learning can be given credit in formal courses.

i) Aid Projects Often Disempower

Many educational projects funded through aid agencies do not sufficiently consult the communities being targeted. One problem is that the projects are too large and become distanced from the end users.

Asia and Pacific Bureau of Adult Education, Consultation(ASPBAE)

Below are seven issues and areas identified by the above consultation.

1. **Community Empowerment - e.g. capacity building.**
2. **Women's Empowerment.**
3. **Sustainable Development.**
4. **Peace and Human Rights.**
5. **Workers' Education and Industrial Relations Issues.**
6. **Literacy and Education for All.**
7. **Tensions (community based providers and participants)**

Chapter Three

NEW PROGRAMME THRUSTS AND INITIATIVES FOR THE PROMOTION OF ADULT EDUCATION: THE ROUNDTABLES

Introduction

The roundtables were organized on different themes as follows:

A. Adult Education as a Tool for Poverty Alleviation and Improvement of Quality of Life.

B. Adult Education for Empowerment of Girls and Women.

C. Adult Education, Culture and Technology.

D. Adult Education for Sustainable Development.

The four roundtables were moderated by different groups, namely: ASPBAE; UNESCO and UNICEF; the Academy for Educational Development (AED); and the Non-Formal Education Department (NFED), Ministry of Education, Thailand, respectively. There was a broad-base participation in each group, from the NGOs, academe and representatives of governments.

Guidelines were suggested relating to the conduct of the roundtables, and each group discussed the themes as efficiently as possible within the limited time allowed for the sessions. The outcomes of the discussion of the roundtables were presented to the plenary. These are included in this part of the regional consultation report.

A. Adult Education as a Tool for Poverty Alleviation and Improvement of Quality of Life

a) Context and Future Scenario

- Asia-Pacific as the world's fastest growing region with great chances of eliminating absolute poverty.

- A population of more than half of humanity.

- Two-thirds of the world's poorest, the majority of whom are women.
- More than 600 million illiterates.
- Rapid economic growth overall, but uneven across countries.
- Growth which creates many disparities between and within countries at all levels.
- Growth with declining quality of life, both for the highly affluent and the very poor, including those classes who are hooked to consumerism.
- Rapid growth that destroys living environments.
- Rapid growth achieved at the cost of basic human rights and accompanied by erosion of spiritual values, cultural diversity and indigenous traditions and knowledge systems.

b) Challenge to Adult Education (AE)

How to be an effective means to achieving socially and environmentally responsible development, for bridging equity gaps, and for creating new values and forging a new vision of human development. Alternatively, will adult education simply be a tool for enabling adults to catch up with the demands of rapid modernization?

c) Presentations

Through life stories and case studies, the presentations by the two resource persons focused on:

1. Rethinking the meaning of poverty, quality of life, and adult education;
2. The need for a transformative paradigm; and
3. The challenges for AE as a tool for transformation and for achieving an alternative development vision.

Both presentations illustrated the dynamics and process of poverty and decline in the quality of life. They linked these issues to the fundamental question of power relations and suggested the need for AE to address them head on. Thus, AE should be a means to changing these relations — a tool for people empowerment.

d) The Discussion

Four broad issues were covered:

i) Recognizing the Transformative Role of AE.

- Self-discovery and awareness raising;
- Generating organized responses to problems;
- Values formation informed by a new vision; and
- Not just vocational but multi-faceted.

ii) The Strategies/Pathways to Achieving this.

- AE focused on developing critical thinking to question existing philosophy, policies and practices;
- Build empowerment education into other interventions (health, credit, vocational etc.);
- Educate the highly educated (politicians, bureaucrats, big businessmen, education leaders, etc.);
- Policy reforms and enabling environment for AE; and
- AE to serve as a trainer of new leaders.

iii) The Role of Governments and Donors to Support an Empowering Vision of AE and its Implementation.

- Enabling policies and legislation for AE; and
- Increased public spending (as a percentage of GNP) for education, in general, and AE in particular.

iv) Strengthening the Quality and Nature of Partnerships among GOs, NGOs, and Corporate Sector

- Consensus building on reconceptualized vision and practice of AE;
- Building co-operation/partnerships through common projects in AE;
- Generating corporate responsibility for AE.

B. Adult Education For the Empowerment of Girls and Women

Characteristics of Empowering Education

a) Critical Analysis

- The ability to question, analyse, challenge and change one's life situation, and understand reasons for one's subordination.

b) Transform, Challenge, (Re)negotiate Power Relations

- Societal/institutional or individual levels;
- Question gender relations, defining men's and women's roles at family level, and at the wider level; and
- Understand that change is not absolute but involves a continuous process of dialogue and negotiation.

c) Process as Important as Outcome

- Tangible and intangible aspects;
- Must involve both men and women;
- Must provide choices, opportunities; and
- Need to define short-term and long-term objectives and strategies.

The process has implications for monitoring and evaluation.

d) Creating Alternative Spaces/Structures

- Organization/collective building;

e) Access and Control Over Resources

- Material resources; and
- Intellectual/information.

There is a need to validate indigenous knowledge.

f) Decision-Making

- Women decide what and how they want to learn.

g) Providing Skills of Education is Not Enough

- Make decisions on what kind of education should be provided, and how the education is to be transacted.

h) Gender Perspective Informs Not Only the Content but also the:

- Methodology;
- Pedagogy;
- Approach; and
- Vision.

i) Underlying the Process are:

- Self-confidence, and
- Self-esteem.

Recommendations/Strategies

a) "Infiltrate", "Influence" Educational Systems

- Formal and informal; and
- Start from primary level.

b) Give Top Priority to Women's Development

- Set targets (short-term, medium-term, long-term); and
- Allocate resources (financial, technical, time)

c) Identify Available Resources

- From government;
- From community; and
- From other donors/possible sources.

d) Formulate Policy and Legislation

- Progressive implementation of policies;
- Propose new legislation to accelerate reform; and
- Encourage sharing of experiences across the region.

e) Organize Training Programmes and Sensitization Activities for:

- Teachers and community leaders; and
- Government and professionals at the highest level.

f) Development of Materials/Curriculum

- Best practice of AE materials;
- Success and failure stories, obstacles and problems ; and
- Participatory materials.

g) Set up a Resource Centre / Data Bank

- For training and material development; and
- As a Documentation /Dissemination Centre.

h) Participation of Women in:

- Political Forum, Public Offices and Decision-Making Bodies.

i) Dialogue with, and Involvement of all Actors in the Country:

- Religious/traditional leaders.

j) Research, Impact Studies and Monitoring

- Develop indicators for women's empowerment.

C. Adult Education, Culture and Technology

a) Defining the Topic

- While not every country can afford the latest in high technology, technologies appropriate to the economic and cultural contexts of the country should be exploited;
- Technology should be used creatively to preserve the diversity of cultures;
- Target groups should be given training on appropriate technologies to produce their own programmes; and
- Governments have a responsibility to help fund appropriate technologies for under-resourced areas so the full potential of these areas can be realized.

b) Some Examples of Successful and Innovative Programmes

In **Pakistan**, university equivalency degrees are now being offered through open universities using radio and television;

In **India**, the National Informatics Centre connects over 500 districts in order to collect information on a wide variety of literacy programmes affecting an average of .8 - 1 million illiterates in each district. The data is collected in the field and sent by satellite and telephone to Delhi to be monitored. Districts have developed much expertise and now prepare their own desktop published materials in their own languages, yet these experiences are not kept only in the district, since they are connected to the Centre in Delhi;

Thailand has over 20 years of experience using technology for adult education. Radio correspondence courses for adult learners are reaching those who dropped out after primary school and want to continue their secondary school education. A recent innovation, available since Thailand gained its own communication satellite, is broadcast television. With the financial help of a Thai NGO, Thaicom Foundation, the Ministry of Education now has one channel dedicated to education. Programming is broadcast all week long with special emphasis on adult learning during the weekend when these learners are available to attend group facilitated meetings to view the programming and discuss the programming and do the follow-up activities;

Korea has many people with access to computers. It now has a new National Multimedia Centre for Education, which is responsible for producing education programmes. The result is that lecturers who may not be available when the learner is available can be accessed through Multimedia;

Nepal is using technology in very creative ways. Some local women's groups have been given video cameras to produce their own literacy courses. With desktop publishing, learners are beginning to produce their own newspapers. The government is using street theatre to raise awareness of the importance of women's education. Some women's groups have scheduled discussions around movies about the roles of women and other societal matters. In this way, the technologies that are available to the local groups are not too expensive or difficult to sustain, and

Philippines use radio to broadcast programmes for the education of farmers. Their problem is how to know how to monitor these programmes and to determine who is listening and learning. Like the case of Nepal, the Filipinos go regularly to movies. They, too, use this technology for group learning discussions.

c) The Main Beneficiaries

- Technology for adult education is targeted to those who are working and do not have time to go to school;
- It is particularly important in reaching women who for cultural or religious reasons cannot go to school;
- Other audiences are people who want additional degrees that will improve their chance of promotion;
- Some very innovative programmes in continuing education are now reaching neo-literates with appropriate learning programmes; and
- In some countries employees of certain large businesses, such as tourist hotels, are having their schooling extended by distance education during hours that accommodate their work schedule.

d) The Major Constraints to Reaching the Full Potential that Technology Offers

- Often a good programme will cease when a new political party takes over the government. Strong education programming as successful as these new technologies may need to be protected by legislation that provides some permanent structures;
- It is feared that teachers are not properly trained to participate in distance education. Much specialized training is needed, especially in adult teaching methods, for a successful programme;
- There may be unanticipated and negative results from the use of education technology if the learner is not consulted and the developer is now extremely familiar or a native of the region being targeted or the population being served;
- Educational television is fairly new in most countries and is not up to the "entertainment" level of commercial television. It has problems attracting and retaining viewers; consequently, in some countries, it has been impossible to gain advertising funds to help support its costs;
- Some programming, such as science education, must be imported from other countries and adapted to suit the experience of the developing country. This is expensive and time consuming; and
- The main constraint to using technology is the cost.

e) Strategies for Overcoming the Constraints

- Programming should be locally produced as often as possible, or target groups should be included in the development. Costs should be shared if possible with other networks.

f) Monitoring and Evaluation

- Monitoring is quite expensive but possibly less expensive than a programme which fails for lack of information. It is important to have both internal and external evaluators looking at programming.

D. Adult Education for Sustainable Development

a) Issues

(i) Evolving Definitions or Models of Sustainable Development Based on the

- Cultural dimension;
- Integrated character including economic, political and social dimensions; and
- Basic values and principles underlying human dignity, social responsibility, etc.

(ii) Existing tensions/contradictions due to -

- Pull of globalization based on economic needs which lead to centralizing and homogenizing; and
- The practice of adult education in communities which would have opposite results from above, as it will lead to decentralization and participation which would be sensitive to the needs of the grassroots communities.

(iii) Other dimensions to sustainable development based on -

- Structures/ownership patterns of resources; and
- Valuing or the need to respect indigenous and local knowledge systems (e.g. aborigines, ethnic groups) and consideration of folk wisdom.

(iv) The centrality of community-based/local perspectives,

- Being aware of the need of adult educators to be conscious of not imposing perspectives from "top" or "centre"; and
- To highlight spiritual dimensions or the potential of the religions to be optimized by adult educators

(v) Inter-generational equity or the consumption patterns, taking into consideration the needs of the future generation.

(vi) Redefinitions and identification of new indicators on the links between quality of life and sustainable development at various levels —taking into account that quality of life should include basic human needs, the needs of the populace, fulfillment of individuals in the holistic sense, etc. The indicators should not limit sustainable development only to GDP, but should identify/utilize new indicators for development.

(vii) Recognition or certification of contributions of non-formal adult educators to community work.

(viii) Political/economic definitions or use of appropriate sustainable development language should be in context, or community-based, and integrated to include economic, political, cultural and social dimensions.

b) Strategies/Approaches

(i) Awareness-raising

- Know options/rights; and
- Critical/analytical thinking skills to be developed, to assist the disempowered to know their rights.

(ii) Networking of key players

- Public, government, civil society organizations (NGOs); and
- Community organizations as the centre of the total development process.

(iii) Actions to address the problems

- Environmental, political, economic, cultural.

(iv) Advocacy at various levels

- Addressed to governments and other sectors of society.

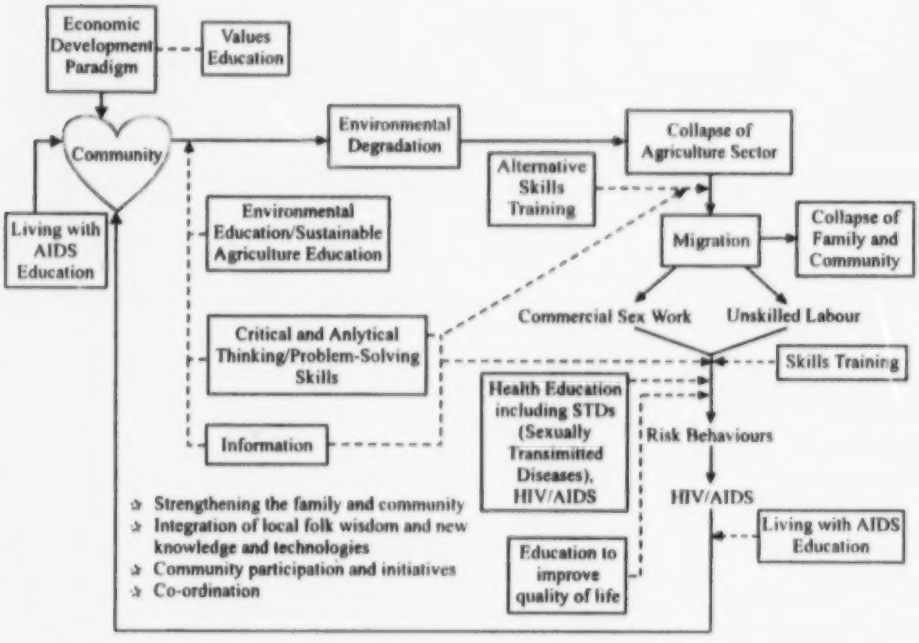
(v) Other interventions

- To address the family (help persons with HIV/AIDS);
- Integrating folk wisdom with new knowledge and technologies; and
- Positive initiatives addressing micro-communities.

(vi) Ensuring quality of interventions

- Never lose sight of sincerity as a catalyst;
- Coping/healing/caring;
- Moving adult education forward; and
- Actions in the hands of adult educators.

c) Paradigm of Adult Education for Sustainable Development



Adult Education for Sustainable Development

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Chapter Four

DECLARATION OF ACTION AND AGENDA FOR THE FUTURE

Declaration of Action

1. We the participants of the Asia-Pacific Regional Consultation in Jomtien, Thailand, during 16-18 September 1996, reaffirm the right to learn, and our commitment to the practice of Adult Education and life-long learning as a means of individual development and transformation for social justice. New issues and perspectives warrant a renewal of our commitment and a broadening of the scope of adult education and life-long learning in our region.

2. We further reaffirm our determination to pursue the goals established in 1990 by the World Conference on Education for All to "meet the basic learning needs of all our people by expanding learning opportunities for children, youth and adults, making primary education universal, and working for a fully literate society"

3. We recognise that:

3.1 our countries contain more than half of the world's population and two-thirds of the world's illiterate. The success of our efforts is critical in achieving the goal of Education for All;

3.2 our region is characterised by extreme diversity and plurality - of peoples, cultures, languages, ethnic groups, religions and cultures, and political systems; the largest and most populous nations exist alongside the tiniest of island states; and

3.3 there is unprecedented economic growth and wealth for some and unprecedented economic crisis and poverty for others.

4. We acknowledge that there have been undoubted gains in the quality and quantity of educational opportunities in adult education since the UNESCO international conference in 1985 including:

4.1 increasing policy pronouncements that recognise the link between adult education, literacy, and development. This has been facilitated by the world conferences on environment, human rights, population, social development, women and habitat, where the critical role of education has been underscored;

4.2 greater investment in literacy programmes as a result of the world conference on Education for All in Jomtien in 1990;

4.3 a greater degree of political commitment to access and equity issues, especially the empowerment of women, and to some degree to indigenous people and communities;

4.4 innovative and effective work of NGOs, people's organisations in adult education as well as gains in social mobilisation, advocacy, and networking which has resulted in increasing devolution of responsibilities to and demand on these non-governmental and decentralised initiatives in providing wide ranging adult education programmes; and

4.5 the private sector is beginning to recognise its social responsibility and is playing a role in adult education and life-long learning.

5. We are concerned with several constraints and barriers to the development and expansion of adult education in the region:

5.1 globalisation, privatisation, and structural adjustments to economies and debt servicing liabilities have forced cutbacks in investment in the education and other social sectors by most governments, resulting in even greater hardships to those at the lower end of the socio-economic scale;

5.2 the Human Development Report of 1996 states that "determined efforts are needed to avoid growth that is **jobless, ruthless, voiceless, rootless and futureless**". This affects the culture, heritage and traditions of the Asia-Pacific region in diverse ways;

5.3 The rise of religious revivalism and the search for narrow identities, increase in unemployment, violence, social disruption, and migration; lack of democratic governance and participation; the relentless degradation of the environment; and increasing assaults on human rights demand creative, imaginative and immediate interventions.

Adult education in its broadest interpretation has the potential and capacity to address many of these issues; and

5.4 indirect educational outcomes like increased social cohesion, better health and well being of individuals, and participation in democratic society, are difficult to quantify precisely and this results in most governments and many NGOs and donors placing little importance on adult education.

ACTION

6 In light of the achievements and constraints outlined above we now resolve to:

6.1 call all governments and international agencies to fulfil their commitments and be accountable to the pledges made in all the world conferences over the last decade by allocating human and financial resources; instituting mechanisms, including policy and legislation; follow-up, monitoring and evaluating the progress towards achieving the stated goals;

6.2 urge a much greater commitment to decentralised planning to adult education. Decision making must begin with community participation and the fullest involvement of local bodies, representatives and local governments;

6.3 call upon all adult education practitioners and stakeholders to critically assess the present practices with a view to increasing the effectiveness, quality and responsiveness of delivery systems; and developing the flexibility to address rapidly changing social, political, economic, cultural and environmental issues as they arise;

6.4 urge much larger participation, involvement and accountability on the part of the private sector, NGOs and other practitioners of adult education;

6.5 stress our commitment to integrating a perspective of gender equality in all programmes;

6.6 urge that the culture and knowledge systems of indigenous peoples must be recognised, respected and built upon in the policies and programmes of governments, NGOs, and all adult education practitioners;

6.7 urge all involved in adult education and life-long learning to focus on addressing the needs of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups; and

6.8 will all initiate new partnerships with actors with similar objectives and strengthen existing alliances within and beyond our region.

Although there may be conflicts at the government-to-government level; with economic alliances often leading to military alliances, there has been an impressive growth of social alliances, which we as adult educators resolve to promote through developing greater contact at the people-to-people level.

Agenda for the future

I. Framework for Adult Education

- Redefine and broaden the scope of adult education to:
  - Consider the diversity of providers and sites;
  - Encompass the sectoral boundaries; and
  - Include prior experiences of local communities.
- Incorporate a gender perspective.
- Emphasize the centrality of community participation and locally based perspectives.
- Build consensus on the reconceptualized vision and practice of AE.

II. Policy

- Set-up enabling environment for AE through:
  - Policy reform e.g. each country should evolve its own adult education/literacy policy;
  - Legislation for life-long learning;
  - Prioritization at national and local levels, and
  - Increased expenditures in education as reflected in the percentage of GNP.
- Develop a comprehensive platform of action.
- Allocate human and financial resources that are distributed equitably to implementors of programmes.

III. Programme Implementation

A. Linking

- Make adult literacy campaigns and community-based initiatives for universal primary education mutually supportive.
- Promote post-literacy and post-primary continuing education through diversified open-learning systems.
- Co-ordinate AE efforts through improved mechanisms at all levels.

B. Participation and Decentralization

- Implement participatory and community based actions to suit the target groups and ensure ownership and responsibility.
- Devolve greater responsibility to the authorities and community-based bodies in the planning and implementation of adult education programmes and in so doing forge dynamic GO-NGO-community partnerships.

C. Development of Materials and Curriculum

- Prepare relevant materials considering learners' needs, and include success and failure stories, as well as obstacles and problems encountered.
- Disseminate practices of AE that are sensitive to women's empowerment.

D. Research and Information

- Undertake research that will improve the methodology of adult learning.
- Promote impact studies using indicators for women's empowerment.
- Set up a resource/documentation centre that will ensure dissemination of studies and materials.

E.Training

- Build capacity by providing quality training for AE personnel.
- Organize continuing education for skill-upgrading.

F. Monitoring and Evaluation

- Institutionalize monitoring and evaluation in all projects.
- Make use of internal and external evaluators to ensure effectiveness and accountability.

G. Special Programmes

- Deal with vulnerable groups, such as migrant workers, displaced people as well as those from relocated communities where educational interventions can facilitate integration into the local society, as well as promote mutual understanding and tolerance.

- Address issues such as:

  - Child exploitation, with a special focus on prevention of sexual abuse of children;
  - HIV/AIDS, with a thrust for preventive measures; and
  - Natural and man-made disasters.

H. Networking, Exchange and Dialogue

- Promote active co-operation among educational institutions, GOs, NGOs and other partners.

- Strengthen networking and exchange of adult educators at different levels.

- Encourage dialogue among governments, NGOs, local communities, private sectors and international agencies, to give out correct and relevant information.

IV. Themes

A. Adult Education and Poverty Alleviation

- Build empowering education into other interventions like health, credit, and vocational training.

- Articulate the educational and entrepreneurship development needs of the participants of poverty-alleviation programmes.

B. Adult Education and Empowerment of Girls and Women

- Mainstream women's perspective in formal and non-formal education systems.

C. Adult Education for Sustainable Development

- Emphasize education for sustainable development to reduce the negative impact on the environment.

D. Adult Education, Culture and Technology

- Include a spiritual dimension and integrate folk wisdom with new knowledge and technologies.
- Critically assess the impact of new educational technologies on learning processes and basic needs.
- Provide opportunities for disadvantaged to have access to new technology but at the same time preserving indigenous cultures.

Annex 1

INAUGURAL ADDRESS AND KEYNOTE SPEECH

by ***H.E. Mr. Sukavich Rangsitpol***
Minister of Education, Thailand

Director-General of the Non-Formal Education Department,
Director of UNESCO-PROAP,
Director of UNESCO Institute for Education,
Governor of Chon Buri Province,
Distinguished participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is indeed a great honour and privilege for me to have the opportunity to give an address at this regional consultation on adult education. It is also an honour for Thailand to host distinguished participants from all parts of Asia and the Pacific Region. May I extend a cordial welcome to all the participants in this regional conference.

This regional consultation on adult education verifies a strong intention and contribution of the organizing agencies — UNESCO and the Department of Non-Formal Education — in their efforts in the realm of adult education. In fact, during the past decade, the Ministry of Education, the Non-Formal Education Department in particular, has co-ordinated with several international organizations in organizing symposiums, workshops and conferences in education. The notable ones are the World Assembly on Adult Education and the World Conference on Education for All, organized in 1990, which marked a rigorous benchmark towards eradication of illiteracy, and quality education all over the world.

I strongly believe that, as a citizen of the world, any person has the right to learn and should be entitled to have access to education according to their competency and needs. It is essential that the government provide educational services that respond to the people's needs. Education, therefore, has to be organized in such a way that people from all walks of life can participate in educational activities at levels and times of their preference.

At one time, it was reasonably appropriate that we placed more emphasis on eradication of illiteracy, and tremendous efforts were put forward to tackle illiteracy. Those efforts have resulted in a higher percentage of adult literacy. By and large, adult education in Thailand has been very good. However, I would like to see adult education in Thailand do more with a diversified emphasis on three periods: the short, medium and long-term.

For the short-term, it is essential that adult education concentrate on literacy education. When I say literacy, I refer to not just being able to read and write Thai, or English in your countries, but also literacy in technology. In this era, anybody who cannot operate a computer could be considered technologically illiterate.

For the medium phase, which is particularly appropriate to the Thai situation, we found out that the average unskilled worker in a factory acquired only-a 6-year education. We have to expand to a 9-year education nationwide to provide enough skills to these workers.

For the long-term, we are looking forward to providing a 12-year education for all Thai people. And thus non-formal education will continue its role of providing higher education for the people. This would be a long-term goal for non-formal education to concentrate on. The main reason that we have to gear towards that goal stems from our belief that to diminish poverty of the people, we have to provide them with suitable education. Education is perceived as a crucial instrument for increasing productivity and income, skills, competency of human resources, and sustainable growth. In the end, education helps reduce social problems, and improves quality of life so that people can live equally with others in society.

The provision of education has to be congruent with the pace of the changing world. This era — the era of globalization where all sources of information can be accessed within a few seconds through Internet and World-Wide-Web linkages, we inevitably have to take a further step beyond literacy level. The speedily changing world and the growth in business and industrial enterprises have led to greater demand of semi-skilled manpower, who need a higher level of education in order to perform their tasks at the adequate level.

To keep up with the speedy change, the educational system can no longer take a passive role. In fact, there is a need for the reform of the entire educational system to keep up with the challenges of globalization and "information technology" so as to prepare our younger generation for adapting to the upcoming challenges.

The focus of education cannot be merely on general and vocational education. It is equally important that the education system provides its clientele with learning skills, so they have the ability to "learn how to learn", the ability to make rational judgments, and they are able to express their democratic rights and freedom. Both individuals and communities must be able to possess the skills and knowledge required to function productively in the changing world. The changing society, especially in business and industrial sectors, will be the main driving force that paves the way for Thailand to become a "learning society" where continuing and lifelong education will actively play a dramatic role in updating the knowledge and skills of the people.

Realizing the need for changes in educational roles and management, the Ministry of Education, under my administration, has introduced several changes as part of the education reform. The goal of the reform is to realize the potential of Thai people to develop themselves for a better quality of life and to develop the nation for peaceful co-existence in the world community. I would like to spend a few minutes more to elaborate on the policy and implementation of education reform after the opening session.

That is why I have to call upon academics and officials in the Ministry to launch a reform. The educational reform has been focused and implemented in four main areas, namely, the school, the teacher, the curriculum, and the adminstrative system.

At the very beginning, the crucial element to be considered for education reform is the management system. The administrative power, in particular, has to be shifted to local authorities, and local participation in the school management is essentially encouraged. We cannot deny that people who know more about the educational needs of local people are those who work and live within that community.

The reason we have to reform is that there has been a wide economic gap between people in the urban and rural areas. Economic growth in Thailand is one of the fastest in the world with almost double digits every year. Currently, the growth is between 7-9 per cent. Twenty-five years ago, the per capita income was $100 a year. Now, the average has reached $2500, which is a substantial increase. However, the growth has resulted in inequality of income. The average income in Bangkok is $7500, while the average in the east coast and the northeast is $4500 and $800 respectively. That is, people in Bangkok earn 10 times more than people in the northeast. The gap between the rich and the poor is very wide. While the unskilled labourers in Bangkok earn 2,000, which is the minimum wage, the people in the countryside earn only $400 a year.

The main question is: how can we expand their level of education to higher levels from 6 to 9 and to 12 years respectively? Currently, expenses for formal education, particularly in vocational colleges, can be very expensive. Parents have to pay $1000-$2000, depending on location, to send their children to vocational schools. Therefore we have to improve and provide free education for poor children up to 12 years in formal schools. Non-formal education, then, should play a greater role in secondary and higher education.

What I would like to achieve is to see our educational system assist people to be able to cope with social and economic problems and progress. Also, it should be a key element to help Thailand catch up with the globalization technology, and eventually, I would like to see the excellence of Thai education by the year 2007, a decade from now.

With regard to the learning society, as I mentioned earlier, optimistically, people from all walks of life should be able to have equal access to education according to their needs and potentials. All sort of boundaries, be they gender, age, socio-economic status, physical or mental disabilities have to be eliminated. To achieve this, we have to distinctively promote continuing and lifelong education, the form of education which is responsive to individual needs and preferences. With educational facilities and a variety of educational programs available, people can make use of the learning centre as a place to acquire technical skills or knowledge adaptive to their work and daily life activities.

It seems that the more the country is developed, the more essential adult and lifelong education will be. Since a great number of people are outside the school system, adult education will always play a great role in the improvement of our human resources. And, I do believe that your coming here to this conference will make a valuable contribution to the milieu of adult education.

On behalf of the Royal Thai Government and the Ministry of Education, I would like to express our sincere appreciation to UNESCO-PROAP, UIE and the Department of Non-Formal Education who have helped make this regional consultation possible. I hope your endeavours here will be fruitful and beneficial to the organizing agencies, the participants, and eventually the target audience of adult education programs. Also, I hope your stay in Pattaya will be a pleasant and memorable one.

Ladies and gentlemen, may I, at this auspicious moment, declare the regional consultation to be officially open, and wish you all every success in your deliberations.

Thank you.

Annex 2

WELCOME ADDRESS

by ***Dr Kasama Varavarn***
Director-General
Department of Non-Formal Education
Ministry of Education, Thailand

Your Excellency Mr.Sukavich Rangsitpol,
Minister of Education,
Dr. Paul Belanger, Director of UNESCO Institute for Education,
Dr.Victor Ordonez, Director of PROAP,
Distinguished Participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the organizing committee, I wish to extend to you all a very warm welcome to the Asia-Pacific Regional Consultation on Adult Education and to many of you, a happy reunion in Jomtien.

This consultation is organized in response to an invitation from UIE to my predecessor, Dr. Rung Kaewdang, to hold a meeting of adult education specialists in preparation for the Fifth World Conference on Adult Education to be held in Hamburg next year.

While we were delighted at the opportunity, we were concerned about the possibility of attracting the best minds in Asia to join us. With the active support from PROAP and ASPBAE, looking around this room today, I think we have succeeded in our mission. We have among us 86 representatives from 28 countries, 30 from NGOs, 30 from government agencies, 5 from universities, 16 from international organizations and a large number of eminent adult educators. We also have many learners to help us chart the course of the future.

The composition of our participants today truly reflects the strength of adult education, namely, a rich diversity of experiences and wisdom united by common commitment to adult learning.

To crown our list of distinguished participants, we are most grateful that His Excellency, Mr. Sukavich Rangsitpol, the Minister of Education, has kindly agreed to preside over the inauguration ceremony and to deliver the keynote address. Over the period of one year that he has assumed this office, the Minister of Education has greatly broadened our vision of education for the future. He has fought to gain more concrete support and investment for education, particularly for the neglected 70 per cent. He has tried to bridge the gap between grass-root operation and policy making by personally visiting a large number of schools. Today we shall benefit from his vision and wisdom. After his keynote address today, I have a feeling that adult education in Thailand will never be the same again.

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This is an exciting and challenging time for adult educators everywhere. Schools are being reformed and children and youth are being absorbed more fully in the formal school system. There is a need to redefine the role of adult education for the future.

How can we become the transformative tool for the future but at the same time retain our commitment for the disadvantaged?

How can we insure the right to learn for more learners without losing our responsiveness to them?

How can we utilize modern technology without losing our cultural roots?

These are some of the questions we, the Thai adult educators, hope to share with you during the next few days.

We are grateful to the UNESCO Institute for Education for the honour to host this important event.

We are also grateful to PROAP for all the needed support and co-operation.

We are equally grateful to all of you for being here.

Let us reaffirm our pledge of Jomtien and let us light our new lights of hope for adult educators and learners everywhere.

Annex 3

WELCOME SPEECH

by ***Dr. Victor Ordonez***
Director, UNESCO PROAP, Bangkok

Your Excellency Hon. Mr.Sukavich, the Honorable Minister of Education,
Director-General Kasama of the Department of Non-Formal Education,
Distinguished Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Sawasdee krup.

I wish I could say a little more to you in the Thai language, but I am a poor example of literacy in this language. There is, however, a word I learned in Thailand six years ago that has become part of my regular vocabulary. That word is "Jomtien." I find myself constantly referring to the principles of Jomtien, the progress since Jomtien, and so on.

As most of you know, Jomtien, in fact, this very hotel we are in now, was the site of the World Conference on Education for All in March 1990. It proved to be a real turning point in basic education.

You will remember that at the time there was an international awareness that renewed attention needed to be given to basic education. The decade of the eighties saw a decline in the importance given by governments and their budgets to basic education. As a result, the number of out-of-school children in 1990 was well over 128 million and the numbers were increasing. Although the percentage of the literate population was slowly climbing, population growth outpaced this, resulting in even more illiterate people in absolute numbers than ever before. On the positive side, the emergence of new democracies, the end of the Cold War, and talk of the peace dividend gave some optimism that the world was now ready to tackle the challenge of providing education for all.

A few months ago, a comprehensive survey was taken of the progress among countries and agencies in accelerating the drive towards education for all. There was good news in the field of primary education; there are now 50 million more children in school than there would have been if the trend of the 1980s had continued. However, it was found that not enough progress had been made in basic education outside the formal school system. This is especially important when one realizes that the fast pace of change and the new modalities of information exchange have made learning outside of schools, in fact, learning throughout life, more important than ever before.

It is for this reason that the UNESCO Institute for Education in Hamburg has had the vision and foresight to recognize that the time has come for a world conference on adult education. Our regional consultation today marks the first of five regional consultations that are designed to lead up to and give substance to that World Conference.

I like to think that the Asia-Pacific region conference will be the first, not only chronologically, but also in substance and impact. Since I have come back to the region from headquarters, I cannot but observe that this region, which afterall encompasses 63 per cent of the world's population and two-thirds of the world's illiteracy, has recently been witness to innovations, fresh approaches, and successful experiences in adult education which are not as evident in other regions and could well place our region at the leadership role in the World Conference.

That of course depends largely upon you, the participants, this week, and your ability to adequately capture the dynamism and progress that adult education has made in this region in the face of limitations and obstacles. I am confident that we will not waste this opportunity to share with each other, and with the rest of the world, the fruits of our very diverse experience.

For this reason, it is you the participants whom I have to thank, first of all, for taking the time and the effort to be with us in spite of heavy schedules, and for your contributions which we anticipate. I must likewise thank the Department of Non-Formal Education of Thailand's Ministry of Education, our gracious hosts and organizers, for the work on the countless matters and details that they have provided to make our meeting both comfortable and successful. I must thank my own colleagues in UNESCO, particularly the APPEAL unit, who have been collaborating closely with our hosts in all aspects of the preparation. Finally, I would like to express my appreciation, and indeed my delight that the Honorable Minister has personally come to join us and share his thoughts with us at such a busy and critical time for the government. I am sure you join me in looking forward to his inaugural address and words of guidance.

Annex 4

SPEECH BY *Mrs. Jamnian Saksakulthai*
MEMBER OF PROVINCIAL COUNCIL
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I am a former NFE graduate at Saimoon Yasodhorn. I finished grade 12 some years ago. Currently, I am a member of Yasodhorn Provincial Council. I would like to share:

- My feelings;
- The things I learnt;
- The effects of NFE education; and
- My suggestions to improve NFE programmes.

Here are the things I gained from NFE study:

- Direct life experience;
- Guidelines for undertaking my trading occupation;
- Being socially accepted by people in the community and the society;
- Guidelines for improvement of family life;
- Learning about social life and the life of other people;
- Becoming more self-confident;
- Being praised by people in the society;
- Learning how to behave properly in social events; and
- Learning how to systematize my thoughts, and solve problems in daily life.

Opinions about NFE Programmes

- NFE Department should promote the people's occupation and income;
- People should be involved in educational activities;
- Mass media should recognize the importance of education and should provide more NFE for the people; and
- Rural people are very poor, NFE should be provided free of charge.

The consequences of my study in NFE programme

1. For myself:-

- I have been more accepted by the people, and have been elected as a distinguished leader;
- I am elected as representative of the people in the Provincial Council for the second term; and
- I have applied the knowledge from my study to my business enterprise.

2. To my family:-

   - Economically, my family has been well-established and quite secure;
   - I have sponsored my relatives to further their education;
   - My advice to my cousins on their business has been productively effective; and
   - I have been regarded as a model person among members of my family and relatives.

3. To the community:-

   - I have encouraged people in the community to further their study up to high school level;
   - I have transferred the knowledge to other people in the community;
   - The community has set up several groups; I have been elected as chairperson of the women's group;
   - I was selected to take a study tour on women's development in France and U.S.A. and, after coming back, have shared my knowledge with people in the community; and
   - I act as a development co-ordinator between people in the community and government organizations, especially NFE office.

4. Suggestions

   - Government should allocate more budget on non-formal education since a number of NFE learners are poor;
   - Sufficient and effective learning media should be provided for learners;
   - There should be several forms of NFE activities; and
   - High technology (e.g. computers) should be adequately utilized in NFE programmes.

Annex 5

BRIEFING ABOUT THE 1997 INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ADULT EDUCATION Hamburg, Germany

Presentation by

Paul Bélanger
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On behalf of the UNESCO task-force responsible for the International Conference on Adult Education, I would like to express our gratitude to the Minister of Education of Thailand, Mr Sukavich Rangsitpol; to the Department of Non-Formal Education and its Director-General, Ms Kasama Varavan, who is also the chairperson of the UNESCO Institute for Education; and to the Regional UNESCO Office, PROAP, and its Director, Mr Victor Ordonez.

Their involvement over and much beyond the first expectations expressed a year ago, indicates the priority they are giving to the expanding field of adult learning in the Asia and Pacific region.

This regional conference and the world conference to be held in July 1997 in Hamburg are unique opportunities to make the voices of adult learners to be heard, to enable the voice of adults, who need to strengthen their competencies, be listened to.

What is central is not the provision, but the aspirations of women and men to improve their quality of life and the social demand to acquire the means to get out of poverty and to generate income. The aspirations of women to empower themselves should be clearly expressed. The necessity to increase productivity in economic production, in health promotion, in the protection of the environment should also have priorities in these conferences. The focus of these meetings will be the aspiration of people to participate with competence in all crucial areas of community life.

There is no sustainable development without creative citizenry. There is no improvement of condition of life without the opportunity for the real actors to improve their capacity to express themselves and to act. There is no production without producers, and no increase in productivity without enhancement of the competence and initiatives of the producers, of people. Adult learning is an essential tool for survival. To learn is a right and a responsibility. It is the best investment a country can make for sustainable and equitable development.

But for adult learning to become a reality for all and in all areas of life, much needs to be done including: concrete evidence on the benefit of such social investment, new commitments, new partnerships, a new and enlarged vision of what adult learning has become over its traditional boundaries and definitions.

Annex 6

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